

MINUTES

Eugene Human Rights Commission
Equity and Human Rights Office – 99 West 10th Avenue
Eugene, Oregon

June 17, 2014
5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Andrew Thomson, Ken Neubeck, Chris Nunes, David Van Der Haeghen, Debra Merskin, Arun Toke, Mary Clayton, Philip Carrasco, commissioners; Michael Kinnison, staff

ABSENT: Councilor Greg Evans

The mission of the Human Rights Commission is to promote implementation of human rights values and principles in all City of Eugene programs and throughout the wider community.

To carry out this mission the commission shall affirm, encourage, and initiate programs and services within the City of Eugene and the wider community designed to place priority upon protecting, respecting, and fulfilling the full range of universal human rights as enumerated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. To support and promote human rights, the commission will: provide human rights education, be proactive in human rights efforts, address human rights violations, ensure active public participation, be transparent and open, and be publicly accountable for human rights progress.

1. **Welcome from Chair/Agenda Review and Adjustment** – Commenced at 5:30 pm

Andrew moved to approve agenda, seconded by Debra, unanimously approved.

Richie moved to approve the minutes as submitted, seconded by Ken, unanimously approved.

2. **Public Comment**
None

3. **Support Requests**

Pride – Request for waiver of parks rental fee. Received approval for funds for portable toilets in previous application. Edward agreed to be HRC representative at the event. Moved to approve by Richie. Seconded by Deb. Unanimously approved.

BEST – Requested endorsement of their effort. Richie move to endorse, seconded by Edward, approved unanimously.

Columbia Law School HR Institute – Ken explained the Human Rights at Home Campaign and its work to get federal government to share information with other levels of government when USA signs an international human rights treaty and to provide resources to implement provisions of those treaties at the local level. State Department's progress in recognizing human rights issues and their relevance in the US. Campaign is asking for signatories to a letter to Sect of State to support movement in this area. Mayor Piercy has signed on. Request is for HRC to become a signatory. Doesn't commit the Commission to anything. Ken moved to endorse and sign on to letter. Arun seconded. Approved unanimously.

4. Work Planning Brainstorm

Mike shared dates and schedule. Chris led discussion on getting ideas on the process. Reviewed last year approach which put previous workplan aside and started from scratch. Propose being more strategic this time and starting with existing work plan and looking at what has been achieved and what group has not been able to get to. Ask what we want to move forward.

Edward – Like idea of starting with existing plan. However, should leave room for some items that were identified as potential topics last year but didn't make it into the work plan. Let's not forget about all the ideas generated.

Mary – How did last couple of work plans compare? Chris – Commission meeting structure changed this year. Every other month were work group meetings. Changed to a monthly business meeting model for current work plan. Arun and Richie preferred current work plan. Arun – consider standing agenda item that focuses on work plan. Ken – We formed work group, recruited community members and focused on homelessness issue. Mike – That was what was envisioned as to how the Commission would approach its work. Ken – Capacity is issue. Can get more done when involving community in the work. Creates connections with community. Richie – Consider referencing how agenda items relate to the work plan. Tracking how work plan is implemented. Help Commission stay focused.

Edward – Frustrating to sign up for lead roles but getting committed to other roles that are consistent with HRC work plan. Important work but no always clear how it relates to work plan. Need to be cognizant of our commitments to other groups and how it is supporting our work.

Andrew – Noticed that we responded to lots of important emerging issues. Is there a way we can leave space for that in our next work plan? Mary – Yes. Can't overload your work plan without acknowledging the need to be able to respond to issues as they arise. Edward – Need to ask does this move the work plan forward. How pressing is the issue? Can get in the way of accomplishing work plan.

Mary – Was the work plan too ambitious? Richie – Better discussion for our work planning. Mike – staff will do that analysis.

Mary – Can we get clarification on delegation of authority to Chair on issues? Mike – Yes. We committed to doing that at last meeting.

Edward – Would like to see Commissioners work with staff to help process information between sessions.

Arun – Could we do 5:30 – 7:30? Richie – Groups have a tendency to fill up their time. Philip – Want to make sure we have time to hear from everyone. Want to be clear at end that all our work was done and we have clear marching orders. Straw poll results – 2 for shorter meeting. Majority in favor of keeping 3 hr. session.

Ken – Reason we didn't have outside facilitator? Mike – No. Just felt staff had capacity.

Chris, Andrew and Mary agreed to assist staff with pre-planning. Staff to coordinate meeting.

5. Staff Update (Environmental Justice Focus Group next mtg. 6/19 2-3:30 pm, Sloat; HRC appointments and thank you to David for service; Paid Sick Leave; CSS Block Party/Fundraiser/BBQ, 7/19, 8-8 pm 1160 Grant St. 683-0836; Peace Week participation)

Deb committed to attending Thursday's focus group meeting. Mike to confirm date/time. Thanked David for his service. Clarified appointments. Paid Sick Leave work sessions. Edward still has interest in doing a media release on this issue. Philip, Chris and Deb interested in helping with that. What support have we agreed to provide to Peace Week? Group is asking for waiver of park fee but not clear in minutes this was approved. Mary – Clarified their itinerary and what is happening at Alton Baker Park at Peace Park. Not interested in library. We previously approved \$200. Want park waiver. Mike – requested they resubmit an application and clarify what they now want

6. Downtown Activity Zone Discussion

Mike – update on discussion at work session.

Richie – Not a HRC issue. Don't think we should weigh in.

Ken – Disagree. Concerned about criminalization of daily life activities. Not many places for people to go at night. Not only homeless committing problems in park. I sent letter as an individual that emphasized we already have laws to regulate antisocial behavior. Don't need to close down public space that punishes everyone. More than overkill. Not good policy. Vast majority of unlicensed dogs are not

downtown. Concerned about people that can't afford to license their dogs. Penalties are large fines and up to one year in jail. Sheltering advocates very opposed to more dogs ending up in the shelters and getting euthanized. Proposals need to be thought through more. Waste of police's time to be checking on dogs.

Jennifer – second Ken's comments. Has noticed efforts to focus on particular behaviors of concern that don't make good public policy sense. How we treat one another in this community is purview of Commission. Obvious that particular groups are being targeted. New laws should be last resort. Puts police in position of criminalization of homelessness. Better to have more social service providers (CAHOOTS) to deal with these issues than law enforcement. Action at plaza today. was to make the point that food carts don't rent entire plaza. Police ruled that they would not trespass participants.

Richie – Don't believe this is about homelessness. It is about behaviors. City has spent a lots of resources to revitalize downtown. Business are downtown again. Fragile mom and pop businesses. Being hurt, not by homeless people, but by behaviors of people. Most are traveling through. Behaviors not conducive to people feeling safe in that area. Intimidating. Dogs and skateboards banned in university area in 90's because of same kind of activity. We should be trying to maintain a positive business environment. Plenty of places for people to gather. Don't have to be at Broadway Plaza. Don't believe this is targeting homeless people.

Philip – All in the language. Appreciate Ken noticing that AIS doesn't even mention homelessness. That is a flag. Not really about dog licensing.

Edward – About socio-economic status. Not sure an issue for HRC. Can see the business perspective. More about who has what rights based on how much money they have.

Ken – Should be doing same think that party patrol does. Focus on the behavior.

Jennifer – As a woman, I'm not afraid of going downtown. Am afraid of the expansion of alcohol based businesses in City. Have been accosted by drunk people downtown at night but not homeless. Gentrification is a bigger problem.

Philip – Worried about this approach expanding to other areas? Richie – This is just about one corner of the downtown. Not about homeless everywhere. Philip – Can we get some statistics to show the magnitude of the problem? Richie – we can invite Police to come to a future meeting.

Andrew – Any action that we want to take? Full incident reports that occur during the time being proposed for closure. Specific to Broadway Plaza. Mike – Will request of EPD.

7. Open Discussion (Homelessness Work Group; MUPTE; agenda prioritization; liaison reports; other announcements)

Andrew shared Mariah Lueng letter. Mike – Have not followed up with Police to get clarification on what arrest was based on. Will get clarification. Commission would like more information before considering action. Philip – Will contact Jewish Federation to see if there is a role for HRC to help mediate. Mike to coordinate with Philip.

Richie – Updated group on meeting with Jerry Lidz, City Attorney, Lt. Erik Klinko, Sgt. Crompton, Richie, Ken and Mike. Explored protected class status for homeless, including homelessness as protected class under Intimidation II and concept of a homeless bill of rights. CA and police did not express outright objections but asked many questions. May not have widespread impacts but provides important symbolic value. All committed to continuing the discussion.

Ken – Music in Meadows was a successful event. Well attended. Concept was to bring neighbors to the meadows to do education on homelessness.

MUPTE – Mike clarified scheduled Council agenda. Philip – Discussed his work with another group on a policy recommendation for oversight (CALC, Bob Bussel, local labor orgs. And others). Will share with HRC to see if this is something the Commission can support.

Edward – PC completed the policy recommending process for anti- bias policing policy. Will include socio-economic status. PC now looking into video monitoring technology for police. Privacy and constitutional issues will be of concern for Commission. PC had a seat in recent Captain hiring process.

Philip – PSO issue. Thinks misrepresented. Wants to support Lorna. Mike – Appreciate his help in connecting with the Latino community and clarifying what the situation is. Will follow up to begin planning how best to do this.